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Weekly Monitoring

Friday 23rd

February



EIA Update

This week, the EIA attended the Festival and Events roundtable in Edinburgh hosted by Sir Chris Bryant, Shadow Minister for Creative Industries and Digital and Neil Bibby MSP, Shadow Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, Culture and Sport.

The meeting received a positive response from Sir Chris who was keen to learn more about the industry and how it could be supported. We will be following up with further information requested by Sir Chris' office to reiterate the important work of the EIA and our asks of policymakers.

Political Update

This week saw the SNP use one of its opposition days to table a motion calling for Parliament to back an "immediate ceasefire" in Gaza. Both major parties then tabled amendments to the original motion and, in a break with convention, the Speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, allowed both to be debated.

The Speaker's decision was largely considered to have pulled the Labour leader out of hot water which led to accusations of rule-bending. Sir Lindsay, facing calls to resign, apologised to the House.

The Conservatives continued to lick their wounds this week, following the double by-election losses last Thursday.

News

[Business community raises concerns about Labour's employment proposals](#)

Following the Labour Party's latest announcements on reforming employment, as part of its "new deal for working people", concern has been raised by the CBI and other business groups about the about the impact this could have on growth.

The CBI has been clear that it is making representations about the 'unintended consequences' of Angela Rayner's employment reforms and is seeking to 'water them down'.

TUC urges business to 'get on board' for Labour's worker's rights plans.

Following these briefings from the CBI, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) responded by arguing that Labour's proposed employment reforms are popular with voters, pushing polling that two-thirds of adults in the UK would support a ban on zero-hours contract, including 60% of Conservative voters from 2019.

In addition, Paul Nowak, the General Secretary of the TUC, emphasised the positive effect banning zero-hour contracts could have on the economy: "Decent, secure jobs are essential to building a motivated, healthy, innovative workforce – all vital for high productivity growth."

Shirley Cooper OBE has been appointed as the new Crown Representative for Small businesses

Shirley Cooper OBE, former chair and president of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, has taken up a key role of Crown Representative for small businesses.

Ms Cooper's role is to lead on the overall relationship between the Government and small businesses and will advocate for small businesses promoting them within the Government and externally.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, Alex Burghart, said:

"Shirley's appointment comes at a critical time for small businesses with reforms of the Procurement Act, which will dismantle barriers to them competing for government contracts, coming into force later this year."

Government announces plans to crackdown on 'fire and rehire'.

This week, Business Minister, Kevin Hollinrake, set out the Government's plans to crack down on 'fire and rehire' practices. The controversial practice refers to when an employer first fires an employee and then offers them a new contract on new, often unfavourable, terms.

A new statutory Code of Conduct has been published to make clear how employers must behave in this area, with the Minister stating that the new Code shows the Government is going "a step further to protect workers across the country."

Concern raised about the accuracy of ONS employment data

This month, the ONS announced that unemployment was at 3.8% – a figure significantly lower than predicted.

Despite this, concern has been raised about the accuracy of the ONS's labour force projections, as only 39% of individuals asked by the statistics office about their employment status have responded.

Parliament

House of Commons

Draft Rail Reform Bill

The Government put forward its plans for the future of railways publishing a draft Rail Reform Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny by the Transport Select Committee.

The draft Bill aims to give legislative effect to a promise first made by then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson in 2018: the establishment of an independent Integrated Rail Body (IRB) – to be known as Great British Railways (GBR) – to oversee both railway infrastructure and awarding contracts for train services.

Written Question on Business Support Helpline

Emily Thornberry, Labour, Islington South and Finsbury asked the Secretary of State for Business and Trade,

"how many telephone calls were received by the Business Support Helpline in each year since 2021?"

Kevin Hollinrake, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business and Trade answered

"The Business Support Helpline (England) provides information, guidance and signposting for businesses in England.

"Since year 2021 to date, the helpline has received 63,705 phone calls. In addition to telephone calls, the Business Support Helpline also receives enquiries via email, webchat and social media."

**For any queries regarding this round-up
please get in touch today.**

Get in touch



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